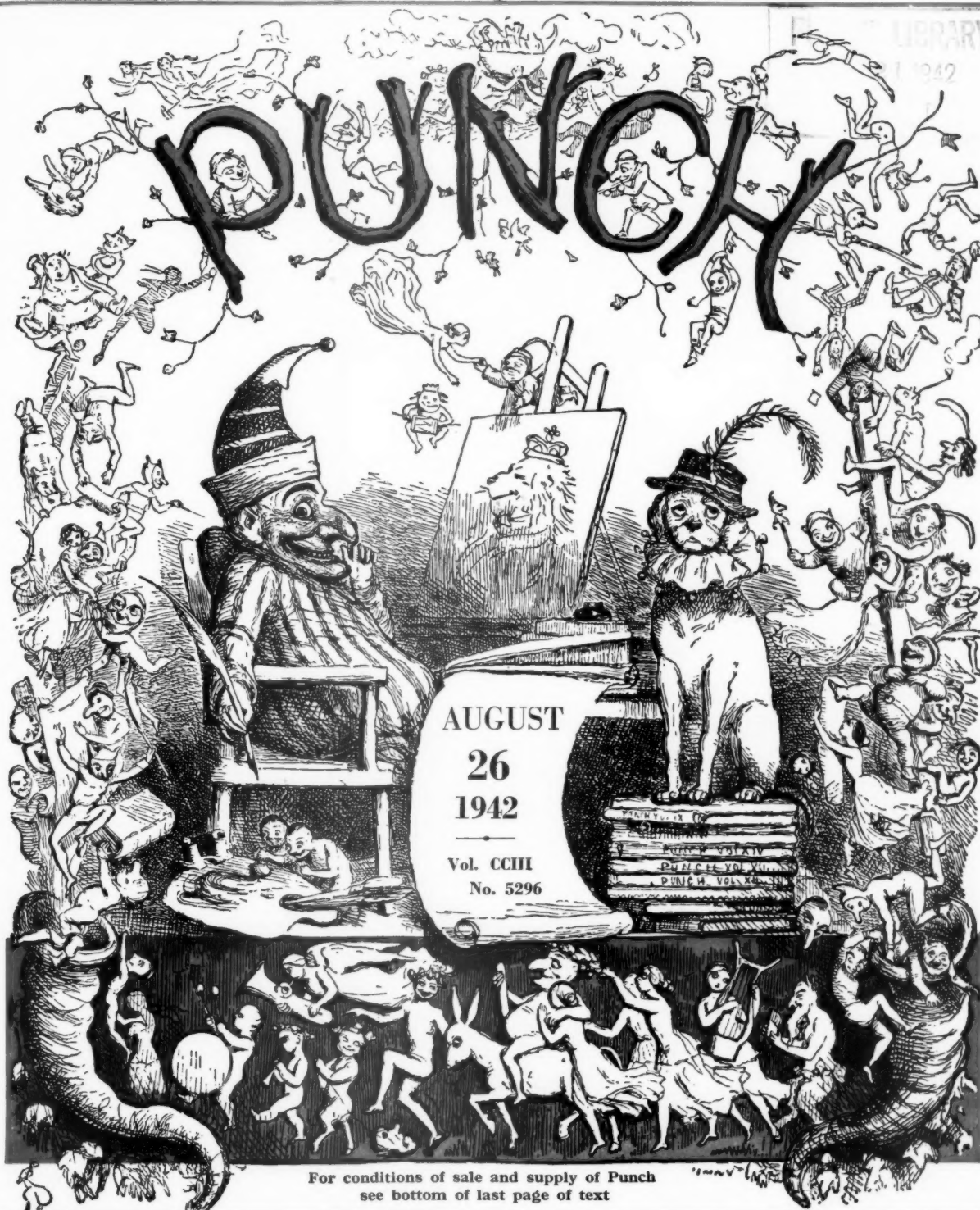


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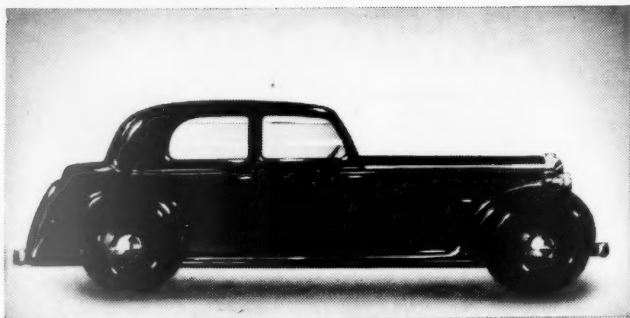
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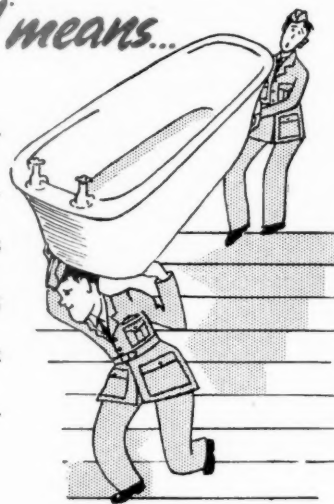
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Get that "walking-on-air" feeling . . .
pores purified; tissues
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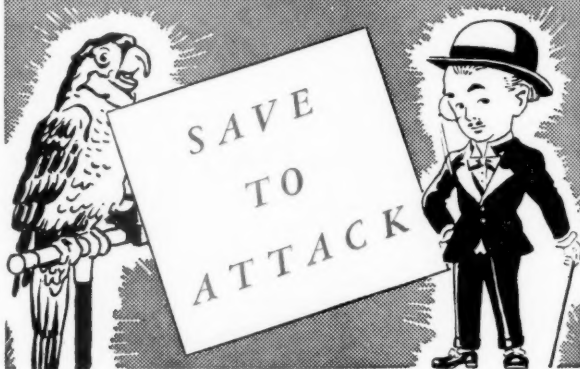
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Angostura will again be
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He: Light on the digestion.

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He: With plenty of Vitamin B.

She: Only snag—we've got to be
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Packets 1/6
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THE True VERMOUTH

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ingredients, a de-
lightful cocktail.

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supplies are re-
stricted—if you
are fortunate
enough to get a
bottle, treat it
with care.



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By reconnaissance won
Made his hopes of
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Wash the place with a solution of SANITAS and warm water, using a swab of clean cotton-wool. Dry with cotton-wool which has been dipped in SANITAS solution and squeezed dry. Then apply a clean dressing with plaster or bandage.

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Do you know — keeping my feet dry has prevented those terrible colds I used to get!

Your repairer's supplies are strictly rationed, but it's worth trying hard to obtain.
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Ronson is the world's finest lighter. Every Ronson owner knows that. So be sure you aren't impairing the efficiency of yours by using inferior fuel and flints in it. A Ronson needs Ronsonol fuel and Ronson flints to keep "lighting-fit." Ronsonol is the finest lighter fuel you can buy because it does not clog the lighter nor does it smoke unpleasantly; Ronson Flints are shaped to fit Ronson Lighters. And you get 18,250 lights a year for 1/3 worth of Ronsonol and 1/3 worth of Ronson Flints—just compare that with the 45/- a year you'd spend on a daily box of matches!

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RONSON FLINTS 6 for 6d.
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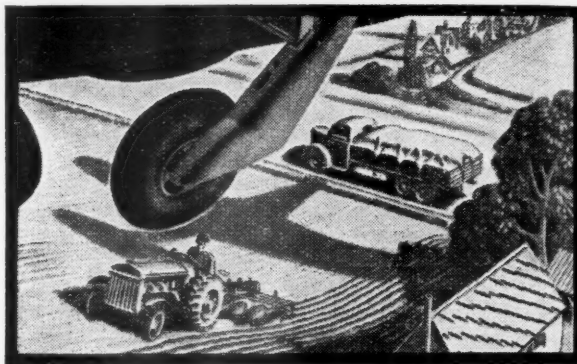
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THAT BRIGHTENS UP
YOUR MEALS



CRUNCHY **RYVITA**
MADE FROM THE WHOLE GRAIN
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RYVITA CONTAINS NO IMPORTED INGREDIENTS



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The bullet-like fighter tucks its wheels away as it rises... the farm tractor lumbers across the field... the mammoth truck eats up the highway's miles... a testimony to the fact that on the land, on the road, and in the air, the use of rubber is fundamental. However high in the stratosphere man's endeavours take him, or however deep in the sea or earth, some form of rubber product will play its part. And the name Goodyear

is there! It is true to say that the name Goodyear is to be found on every page of the story of rubber's development.

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Another

GOODYEAR

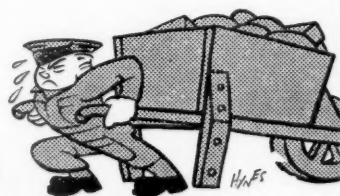
contribution to Progress



Not too
little...



not too
much...

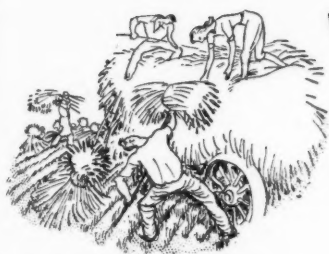


but just right



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DOUBLE-DENSE LATHER OF
ERASMIC
SHAVING STICK

ER 341-96



OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIII No. 5296

August 26 1942

Charivaria

SOME Italians are wondering what Italy will get out of the war. Many more are wondering when.

The number of war-vessels launched in America is kept secret. By this means Tokyo can only announce approximate sinkings.

Dr. GOEBBELS' propaganda department has issued a short history of the war. It is not so short as was originally intended.

We see it stated that the ant is still the most industrious of insects. Yet they always seem to be attending picnics.



A man was arrested as he was about to board a train at a London station. The police pointed out that his journey was not really necessary.

The FUEHRER is said to be very fond of mushrooms. We wish he would eat some that he thought were.

"English music will sweep the world after the war," says a correspondent. Is it too much to expect that an Italian tenor will have no success in Rome unless he calls himself Smith?



A woman has written to an evening paper to say that a piano-tuner called on her although she had never ordered him. Perhaps her neighbours did.

The *Evening News* states that a Versailles woman who gave birth to four children is doing well. More could hardly be expected of her.

"I saw a dramatic critic leaving the theatre on a recent first night clad in a smart lounge suit," says a gossip writer. It was a credit to his tailor that the suit didn't look as if it had been slept in.

In the summer, we are told, American housewives serve ice-cold meals. We can imagine the reproaches heaped on a tardy husband when he lets his breakfast get hot.

Impending Apology

"This allotment more than holds its own as a centre of attraction for visitors, most of whom are to-day vegetable-minded."—*The Daily Mail*.

An ornithologist says that the bird with the longest bill is not the stork, as so many people imagine. Especially young fathers.



"Harold Butler, torpedoed seaman, was interned in French Guinea, escaped by digging a tunnel, and has now reached Cape Town."—*South African Paper*.

Mother frightened by a mole?

A Swede in New York claims that at one time he acted as masseur to GOERING. But apparently with no lasting effects. Truth is stronger than friction.

An Assistant Master at War

Further extracts from the papers of Lieutenant A. J. Wentworth, late Assistant Master at Burgrove Preparatory School

WEDNESDAY.—Major Faggott says I am to regard myself as attached here pending posting. "We can always do with another officer," he said at breakfast; "it makes the messing easier."

"But look here, sir," I expostulated. "I've been posted to the 600th. I really think I ought to be getting along."

"I'll fix that," he said. "I'll speak to Charlie about you," and explained in answer to my inquiry that Charlie was A.G.6. I did not quite like to say that I was unaware who or what A.G.6 might be, and was therefore obliged to let the matter drop. I suppose it is all right, but really it all seems a little irregular.

"What are we going to do with him?" asked the Major suddenly. "We can't very well make him O.C. Transport, because there isn't any. At least, we could, of course, in case some comes along."

"Gas Officer," said a tall thin man who had just come in. "Where's the *Mirror*?"

"By the way, this is Hobson—Wentworth. Hobson is my gunnery expert. You wouldn't think he had a glass eye, would you?"

"How do you do?" I said. "I certainly shouldn't. In fact I can hardly tell the difference even now."

"Very tactful," said Faggott, slapping his leg and laughing like a madman. "You've made a friend for life there, Wentworth. He says he can hardly tell the difference, Hobson, old boy. The same glassy look in each of them, eh? What?"

"I'm afraid I fail to see the joke, sir," I said coldly. The fact is the Major's laughter seemed to me to be in the worst possible taste. After all, one doesn't laugh at another man's infirmities.

"The joke is he hasn't got a glass eye," said Faggott, rolling about in his chair in the most unseemly way. "Which did you think it was? The dull-green one, or the one with all those red streaks in it? Oh, dear, oh, dear, Wentworth, you'll be the death of me yet. 'Hardly tell the difference,' wasn't it? I must make a note of that."

"I'm afraid I know very little about gas, Hobson," I said, to change the conversation. "I mean, I should have to have a course of instruction before I could conscientiously take on the appointment."

However, Hobson assured me that that wouldn't be necessary. "This is a new unit, you see," he explained. "Just forming. So nobody knows anything about anything. You'll just have to pick it up as you go along."

"Like a crossing-sweeper," added Major Faggott, with his usual lack of taste.

* * * * *

Apparently my first duty as Gas Officer is to go up in an aeroplane. I was rather surprised at this, naturally, for I failed to see the connection, but Major Faggott explained that we had been ordered to send an observer on an air co-operation exercise and I was the obvious person to go. He said he believed, as a matter of fact, that the message was intended for another unit, but it had come to us so we must just carry out instructions.

"But I have never flown," I objected.

"It's quite easy," said Hobson. "You just get in and sit still, and then you get out again when you get back to the ground—"

"Or sooner, as the case may be," said Faggott.

"You won't be expected to take the controls," added

Hobson. "The R.A.F. have undertaken to provide a qualified driver."

"Pilot," I corrected, *sotto voce*.

Thursday.—It has been a most interesting experience. The exercise was at night, which I hadn't expected, so that one was unable to see the ground; but of course it was the same for the pilot and the rest of the crew, so I must not grumble.

The R.A.F. were most kind. They gave me a parachute before we started and explained how I was to use it. "You probably won't have to," my pilot told me, "unless there are hostiles about and we get pranged."

"Pranged?" I said.

"Yes."

"I see," I said, though I confess I did not quite follow what he meant.

"In that case, just nip out, count three slowly and pull this thing."

"Right," I said briskly. "Does one come down with much of a bump?"

"Oh, no," he said. "Unless the parachute fails to open."

"I see," I said.

It is not very easy to get into a bomber at night, and unfortunately, when I had got in, there was no seat for me and I had to squat on my parachute.

"By the way," said the pilot, when we were all inside, "you've come as an observer, haven't you?"

"Yes," I said. "Yes, yes."

"What are you going to observe, particularly?"

"Well," I said, "nothing particularly. Just general observation." The fact is nobody had remembered to tell me what I was supposed to be doing.

"Afraid you won't see much to-night," he said. "Except the stars."

"It doesn't matter, thanks," I said. "I'm a Gas Officer, really. At least, I hope to be when I have had a little more experience."

"I see," said the pilot.

Soon after that he started up the engines and conversation ceased. It is rather noisy in a bomber when the engines are going—"revving," as they say—and one has to shout to make oneself heard.

"How high are we now?" I shouted, when we had been roaring along for about five minutes. It is quite impossible to get any idea of height when you are flying in the dark.

"We haven't started yet," shouted the pilot. "I'm just warming her up."

"Oh," I said, feeling rather a fool. I suppose in the noise and darkness I had got rather confused.

However, it was much the same when we did start, except that one had to shout rather louder. The machine was very steady and after a time I became more used to the noise and began to get ready to observe. Then, without any warning, there was a sudden bump and the aeroplane dropped like a lift.

I kept my head, and turned inquiringly to the pilot.

"Pranged?" I shouted. But he shook his head and said "Cloud."

"I see," I cried, but I don't think he heard me.

Nothing happened for another ten minutes and I began to grow aware that my seat was far from comfortable. By pure ill-chance, in endeavouring to adjust the parachute on which I was sitting, I caught hold of the wrong handle and something came right away in my hand. I rose to a



THE BULLDOG HAS WINGS.



"But seriously, darling, Mr. Morrison has quite definitely killed the gas-mask fashion."

crouching position and turning round to see what was amiss was horrified to see a volume of white material, like dough, pouring out of the wrapping. I did not know what to do and the pilot, not realizing my predicament, added to my difficulties by turning the machine abruptly on its side so that I was thrown off my balance and forced to put out a hand to save myself. Instantly there was a sharp report and some kind of flare or firework was projected from the underside of the aeroplane.

The pilot said something which I did not catch, for I had my hands too full at the moment to attend to him. It is a skilled task, I am informed, to repack a parachute in the most favourable conditions, and I do not believe it can be done in a crouching position in an aeroplane in the dark. There is a great deal of material to cope with, for one thing.

My great fear was that the thing would master me and spread all over the aircraft so that we should all be choked or, if not that, that the pilot would no longer be able to see the controls. It seemed to spring up after me the moment I rose from a sitting position, and do what I would, folds and loops of the stuff kept oozing out from under me at the sides and back.

"Sit tight," I said to myself, "and keep your nerve," and I remember thinking to myself what a story this would make to tell to the boys, if ever I should get back to the old life at Burgrove. I think this helped to steady me.

Suddenly I felt a tap on my shoulder and carefully turning about I found that the navigator was trying to communicate with me.

"What do you say?" I cried. "I can't hear you."

"Your shirt's hanging out at the back," he roared.

I realized then that the parachute had got hitched to my Sam Browne, which I had put on for the flight, and it was this, of course, that had given it a tendency to rise up in the air when I moved. I unhitched it and had practically no further trouble, I am thankful to say.

"I am afraid you were too busy to observe much," said the pilot when we landed.

"Not at all," I said. "It has been a most interesting experience for me."

"It has for all of us," he said, which I thought very nice of him. After all, one flight more or less in a bomber, even at night, is all in the day's work for its gallant crew.

H. F. E.

War-Time Letters to My Wife

I HAVE always been given to understand that I am a good letter-writer. After reading one of my letters written when I was ten an uncle of mine said: "This boy ought to be able to write one day," and it was on or about my fifteenth birthday that a Miss Beatrice Blotter, an old friend of the family and the author of several works on fortune-telling by cards, said to my mother: "If Arbuthnot doesn't write by the time he is twenty I shall be very surprised." Later on, when I had left school, my father took me aside and said: "My boy, why don't you try and write?"

Before the war my wife used to keep all my letters. Although she never said so, I have an idea that it was her intention to publish them at some future date. They were mostly letters I had written to her before we were married—love-letters really—but they touched upon many subjects of general interest, as I was, at the time, deeply engrossed in the study of philately and I frequently wrote to her at great length on this subject. My wife used to say that I cared for my stamps more than I cared for her, but this was only her idea of a joke, as I used to write about many other things as well, such as my fretsaw work, gardening, taxidermy, ornithology, and of course the weather.

It wasn't until I joined up at the beginning of the war that I again took up my letter-writing in earnest. In the early days of the present conflict I used to write to my wife every day, describing to her in detail what life in the British Army was like, what sort of companions I mixed with, and how anxious we all were to come to grips with the enemy, who was then, of course, not quite so near to our shores as he is now.

While other men of my unit used to sit for hours at a time, gazing vacantly into space and chewing the ends of their pencils, I would dash off page after page with the utmost fluency, giving vivid pen-pictures of the various parts of the Lewis Gun (Mark II), together with details of the more usual stoppages, or discussing in general outline such fascinating subjects as map-reading and blanket-folding. I was, indeed, never at a loss for a subject, and in those days, having no secrets to hide from the enemy (I was nevertheless careful not to say too much about the weather, merely giving the barometric pressure and an *average* cloud-height for the period under review), my letters were exceedingly frank and informative.

When the aerial blitz on this country began my wife was living in London, and after she had been bombed out four times I noticed that her letters to me underwent a marked change. She ceased to mention the fact that the cat was getting thinner and began to write authoritatively on aerial warfare. She wrote of Dorniers, Heinkels and Junkers 88s with as great a degree of familiarity as she formerly wrote of her mother, Mr. Sprout, the butcher, and the woman who used to live next door. She compared the Spitfire (Mark I) with the Messerschmitt 109 (D.B. 600); she discussed the effects of blast and the best method of dealing with incendiaries; she spoke of the impossibility of identifying aircraft by sound alone, and of the similarity of the Blenheim (Mark IV) to the Junkers 88 A-1 (Jumo 211A).

All this time I was still getting off a long letter a day to my wife, telling her about the garden we were making (under the supervision of our sergeant-major, an ex-market gardener), and giving her a comprehensive survey of the books I was reading. Once our spotter thought he saw a Dornier (or a Heinkel—he wasn't sure which), but it turned out to be one of our own Whitleys, and in mentioning this thrilling incident to my wife I told her, not for the first time, that she must on no account worry unduly about me, that while naturally I was exposed to danger, there was after all a war on and I was a soldier.

I must confess that about this time the quality of my letters began to show a falling off. There were even occasions when I used to sit and chew the end of my pencil with the others. Gardening had come to a standstill and I had read every book in the local library. I of course frequently visited the cinema and was entertained to camp concerts, sing-songs, dances and the like, but I hesitated to enlarge upon such activities in my letters to my wife, as I knew that she was being subjected to great hardships—indeed, on one occasion, while spending the week-end with friends in the country, she was machine-gunned by an enemy raider of the hit-and-run, or sneak, type. Fortunately, however, she escaped injury.

For more than a year my letters

continued to suffer from a lack of suitable material. My unit seemed to be as remote from the main theatre of war as if we had been stationed in, I think, Greenland. Then one cloudy day (ten-tenths of cumulo-nimbus) a Junkers 88 dropped some bombs in a nearby field, and that same night the guns opened fire on enemy aircraft which were raiding a neighbouring town. Two nights later we ourselves were bombed, and this marked the beginning of a period of enemy air activity which has kept us on the alert almost continuously ever since.

On the occasion of the guns opening fire for the first time, I sat down and wrote what was probably the best letter I have ever composed. I described the scene with a wealth of expression I had hitherto been chary of using, largely through lack of opportunity. I wrote of how "the night was made hideous by the screech and whine of falling missiles" and of how "all hell seemed to break loose" as a stick of bombs straddled a haystack less than half a mile away. I put all I had into that letter, omitting nothing, and giving a pen-picture of the action which would have done credit to a neutral observer of many years' standing. I even drew a map to show just where the bombs fell, and indicated the positions of the various military objectives which suffered damage.

But my letter never got as far as the post-box. At the last moment I suddenly realized that if what I had written were to fall into the hands of the enemy I should be guilty of the gravest offence against my King and Country. So I tore the whole thirty-six pages into shreds and merely wrote and told my wife that enemy air activity had been on a small scale in the north-east of England, and that there had been some material damage and a few casualties. And when a day or two later our guns again went into action, I merely wrote that enemy air activity had been on a reduced scale and that there had been some small damage to property. (It had seemed to me at the time that all hell had again broken loose, but I successfully overcame the temptation to say so.)

Now, after some weeks of almost continual manning of the guns, my wife writes to say that she is greatly disappointed with the letters she has been getting from me, and she feels that it would do me good to apply for a transfer to an area where I could lead a more active life. I really do not know what to say to this as I find that

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

I am no longer interested in gardening, or any of the other hobbies which used to attract me, and the only books I now read are labelled "Secret."

I have just sent off a hurried note to my wife telling her that a small force of enemy bombers took part in scattered raids over this country late last night, and much as I should like to let her know that the blast from a one-thousand-pounder blew me through our canteen window, I feel compelled, for security reasons, to remain silent. I do hope my wife will not misinterpret this silence and jump to the conclusion that I am losing all interest in life.

Vehicle Maintenance

Oh, take my love
Of Art for muck
and tell me of
the Army truck.

Take thoughts that flow
on classic lines
and make them go
around on splines.

Persuade the eye
sternly to bore
where it would shy
away before;

so seeking out
with expert speed
the Plug in Doubt,
the Fraying Lead.

Nor ever let
a Gasket blow
or Points get wet
and I not know.

Let music be
the Tappet's tap,
the symphony
of Piston-slap.

Tyre Scrub as well
sing out your song
so I can tell
when things are wrong.

Oh, when at eve
descends the dark
may I perceive
the Shorting Spark,

And when at night
I go to sleep
make dreams all right
that star the Jeep.

And so, till Peace,
make this the thing:
with oil and grease
to serve the King.

WORKER'S NOVEL COMPLAINT

HENRY BINCH, a shipwright of Bootle, has complained to the police that his wife has been lowering his morale and thus impeding his war effort. "I do not like the way she talks," said Mr. Binch, "and the way she says it is even worse." When asked what she talks about he replied, "Nothing in particular. Just a kind of general criticism all round. There ought to be a law to keep people from depressing people these days." On being informed that there is no legal method of dealing with his complaint Mr. Binch refused to go home. "If there is no law to help me, why not make one?" he demanded. "Is that too much to ask? I do not think the police are taking this war seriously enough."

SECRET WEAPON

Professor Dibber has perfected another secret weapon, according to several well-informed rumours. The details of the secret have not been made thoroughly public, but it is understood that the Professor has been working for some time on a new type of shrapnel which hurls lumps of sugar in all directions and with considerable force. The object, of course, is to ruin any petrol with which the sugar may come in contact. A similar invention is the sugar-coated bullet for use against petrol-tanks. "If we could only pump treacle into their oil-wells," says the Professor, "we'd really be

No News is Good News.

getting to the source of things." The day of the flying treacle-pump may not be so far off as we are apt to imagine.

WHAT IS A HUMAN BEING?

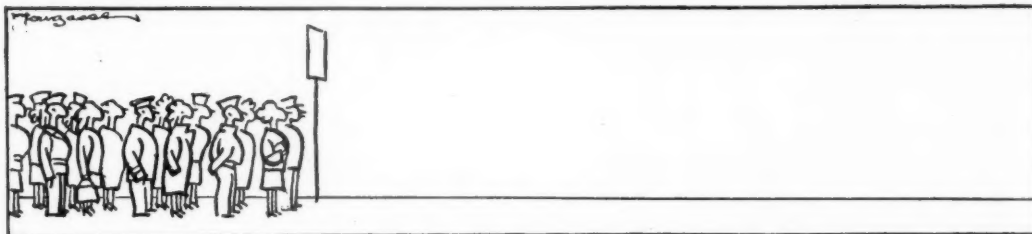
Harvey Zwack, the all-in wrestler, who is charged with theft, drunkenness, assault, slander, forgery, arson, and malicious damage to property, has pleaded Not Guilty on the grounds that the criminal law applies only to the human race, of which he does not think he is a member. "Take a look at me," he shouted in court. "Do I look like a human being? No. I am just a wild beast." The judge admitted that Mr. Zwack resembled an ape, but pointed out that he possessed the power of speech, a gift denied to even the highest of the anthropoid apes. "Not to parrots, though," said Mr. Zwack. "And how do you know a parrot couldn't teach an ape to talk if he tried long enough?" Mr. Zwack went on to say that he did not necessarily claim to be an ape. He felt he was more of a Missing Link. Was the judge prepared to deny that a Missing Link could talk? "And if," said Mr. Zwack, "this Link can talk, does that make him a man? Never. Anything but." Mr. Zwack produced pictures of the Java Man, and the court admitted these pictures looked far more human than the prisoner. "Do you want me to send you to the Zoo?" asked the judge. "I don't want you to send me anywhere," replied Mr. Zwack. "My whole case is that you have no jurisdiction." The case continues. Several anthropologists will be heard tomorrow.

WIGS FOR BOY SCOUTS?

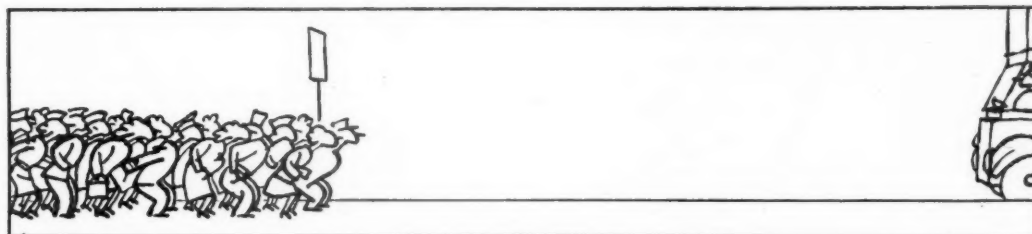
According to Mr. Ellery Fungus, authority on camping and woodcraft, the days when a damp match could be ignited by passing it through the hair are swiftly vanishing. "What with our modern way of training troops and even Boy Scouts by plunging them into a river, fully clad, every few minutes," said Mr. Fungus to our representative yesterday, "there is very little dry hair to pass a match through. If everyone carried a wig in a waterproof bag, we could easily get round this difficulty." If the wigs were made of some edible material, he went on, they could serve as an extra iron ration. Also, they might be stained green for the sake of camouflage; a large force of troops in green wigs would look very confusing from the air. It is understood that the possibility of making a



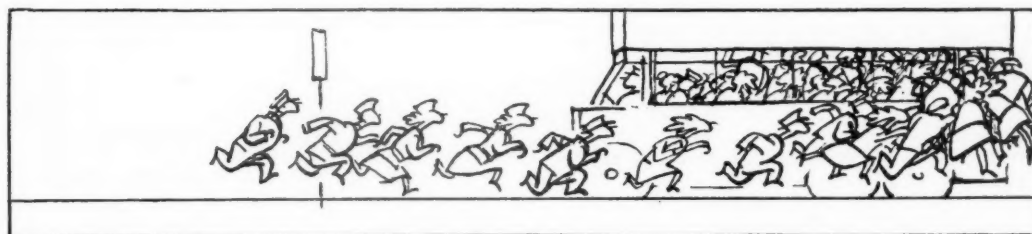
"Anyone in 'ere got any talent?"



Queuing for buses certainly does—



make it fairer: the people at the front—



don't have quite so far to run.

soldier's entire kit from edible materials has long been under consideration.

AMAZING PROPHECY

Workmen have recently unearthed a very ancient stone in a churchyard in Essex. Much of the writing on the stone is no longer decipherable, but the following quatrain stands out very clearly:

"When men eat pigs with mashen roots
And iron stone like arrow shoots
And iron birds fly blind at night
Then England will have many a fight."

This amazing prophecy, which not

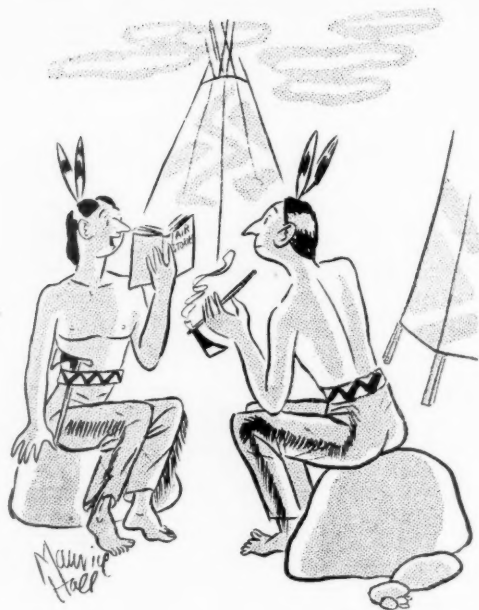
only refers to the comparatively old science of artillery but to the new one of blind-flying, must have been written before the potato was introduced to Europe, since it hints at sausage-and-mashed as something in the future. It is not unlikely that the author of these lines was the prophet who foretold powdered milk and sugar rationing in the well-known lines:

"When beer gets water and milk gets none
There lacks a sweetness in the bun."

A SPORTING CHANCE

Mr. Wallace Tarp, the well-known sportsman, has been using lighter fishing tackle every year in order to

give the fish a sporting chance, but now he feels he has reached the limit. "I have caught twenty-pound salmon on cotton thread," he says, "and I don't see my way clear to cutting down much more on my tackle. I am now trying a new system which, I think, gives the fish an even better chance. I use the heaviest gear I can get. Last week I fished for small trout using a two-inch manilla rope tied to a heavy iron crowbar. The flies were large dragonflies tied to massive blunt hooks. I never caught a darn thing. I don't see what better chance the fish could have, unless I stayed home in bed." Let us hope that many fishermen will give this method a trial, since it promises so well.



"... and then another Heinkel bit the dust."

Bombs on Saint-Malo

["... and on the docks at St. Malo, one of the busiest ports in North-West France."—Daily Telegraph.]

MOI, je suis Malouine,
Because I own four rooms in a corsair palace
Facing away from the sea,
Regarding the Rance, behind the ramparts of Vauban,
Round which a hilarious England endlessly strolls
(Treepairs!) in August; but we should be lost without
them,
Faithfully homing year after year to Saint-Malo,
Faithfully homing, just as the great *Terre-Neuviers*,
Seven-and-thirty ships from the fishing-grounds of New-
foundland,
Find their way back in September.

August again, and English bombs on Saint-Malo!
On the absurd little docks where the *bateaux anglais*,
Boats of the *southern* (for so in simple affection
We christen the Southern Railway), berth in the twilight
After the voyage (*pénible? mais je le crois bien*)
Here from *Sou-ton-ton*.

Bombs on my corsair palace, on M. Le Docteur
Tribondeau,
On M. L'Avocat Jean, one flight and two flights above me?
Heaven forfend! Bombs on our mutual stairway,
Grandiose stone of Louis Quatorze lit by green-glazed
lozenges
With a watery light? (You can hear the sea-mews without
As you climb; and below in the street, between us and the
ramparts of Vauban,
The tethered donkeys and mules of the folk of the market

Scrape the cobbles and bray and clink the chains of their
tether;
And above, in our courtyard within, on pulleys they wind
from their windows,
The washing of Madame Tribondeau, dozens of childish
garments,
And the washing of Madame Jean, more little frocks and
breeches,
Wave in the sunny wind.)

If there must be bombs on Saint-Malo
On the dear, salt, all-but-island, on the Bretons who
loved us and sang
Our songs, to show that they loved us, the night it started
again
(As they always knew it would start. "*Encore il nous le
déclenchera,*
Vous verrez, cet 'Eclair!'")
If there must be bombs on Saint-Malo, grant that the
right Hun gets them,
Not M. Le Docteur Tribondeau and M. Jean and the
children.

But perhaps they are all departed and the corsair palace
is empty,
From the cellars below the rock of the Rance to the little
pièce in the mansard,
Whence, gazing out on the Roads and drinking the night
as it deepened,
With all Saint-Malo abed and the dim docks shrouded in
darkness,
I watched the *bateau anglais*, ablaze with lights
From stem to stern, steam out for the open sea
Like a soul committed to heaven. H. P. E.

H. J. Talking

YEARS ago we had a lawsuit in the family, and one
time and another nearly all of us got caught up in
it. Indeed it always seemed to be my turn to give
evidence or get on to the jury or something when it was
particularly inconvenient. B. Smith usually acted as my
deputy, being good at make-up so that he could act as my
double when I was tired of giving evidence. This caused a
certain amount of contradiction, but it was our pride that
no one in the case was ever convicted of perjury, because
in the perjury trials as well we provided all the witnesses.
Some judges would be pleased when they saw us and some
would groan, but there was one new judge who had never
met our case before, and he got it into his head that what-
ever had been done my wife had done it, and she got it into
her head that the judge was really Cousin Wilkinson, and
was thus getting an unfair advantage over us. He did
everything he knew to persuade her she was wrong, but
when she said that Cousin Wilkinson was known to have
a birthmark in the shape of a harpoon in the small of his
back the judge said it was against precedent for him to
convince her, although the jury remained rather suspicious
and added a rider that the question was still moot.
Several times we got as far as the House of Lords, though on
occasion we descended as low as a coroner's court. Mrs.
Oscar's boy produced some very useful documents for us,
and by clubbing together we had a special volume of law
reports privately printed, and this was very damaging to
the other side when suddenly produced without previous

FROM ISOLATED POSTS

FROM a letter received: "I write to express the great gratitude of the men and of ourselves. It has been such a pleasure to take round these woollies and see the delight of the men and hear the next day that they'd been really warm the night before. These men have a very hard time and have to stand-to in all weathers with very little protection. The gifts provided by your Fund have made a very real difference to them." Please join in the service by sending your contribution. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

warning. Many writers of legal text-books made references to our case, but rejected our claim for royalties.

One of B. Smith's most useful ideas was the invention of a dead judge who was claimed to have let fall many *obiter dicta* favourable to our side. We produced oral evidence of these in the person of the oldest living inhabitant of the Temple. As this was really my brother Coot dressed up, we had to keep him carefully muffled, producing a medical certificate that he was so old that if light shone on him his skin would drop off. When the Court said they had never heard of our dead judge we produced a painting of him hurriedly done by my wife, first giving it to the Inner Temple as a condition of their accepting a large quantity of port. As soon as it was hung publicly on the wall we had it taken down and brought into court with people to swear that that was where it had come from. On one occasion the Lord Chancellor said that our dead judge did not occur in any official list, and this took us aback, but only for a moment. We produced evidence that he was the same as a dead judge whom everybody admitted was real, and said he had changed his name but told only a few friends. The Lord Chancellor then said that our portrait did not much resemble another portrait of the real judge which there happened to be in circulation, but we explained this away by getting the director of the National Gallery to swear that the portrait my wife painted was the work of a very low-kind of artist. He was just going on to give evidence that the paint in parts was still wet when I released five wasps which I had brought with me as a precaution, and by the time the court resumed we had got our witness safely away.

On the whole one of our greatest difficulties was with a man called Dr. Ferguson, who was always bobbing up as a witness and was found by both sides to be completely incorruptible. We could pool our knowledge over him, as he always gave his evidence against both sides together. Among other plans we tried was getting Dr. Ferguson on the jury, but he merely sat through one section of the case, got exemption for seven years, and reappeared in the witness-box next time. It was difficult to poison the minds of the judges against Dr. Ferguson, as he was well in with them through being among other things obituary writer for a legal paper, which gave him much power.

Up the page I have referred to a brother named Coot, that being what his mother said he was as bald as when young. At the age of ten I tried to better myself by selling him, as I had read in history books of the commercial value of children, but times seemed to have changed and the market was not all it had been. I first tried to sell him to a mill-owner, and dragged him to a windmill I had often noticed in the distance, but on arrival we found that it

was inhabited by two artists who tried to make us buy first water-colours and then tea. I next offered him at the docks for the slave-trade or alternatively as a cabin-boy, but here again trade seemed sluggish, and as my last attempt, with vague memories of Burke and Hare, I tried to sell him to a hospital, which seized him and removed his tonsils without compensation, although I argued it might reduce the value of the property.

Later, Coot became a teacher, and after teaching widely a post was hurriedly made for him on the staff of a training college, it being thought misleading to the students to have only good teachers; and among the courses he gave was one on discipline, in which he demonstrated unarmed combat, how to extinguish stink-bombs, and nonchalance, which consisted of sneering while an assistant buzzed things past his head. He also produced a book entitled *The Schoolmaster's Friend*. It contained two hundred recipes for impositions and was bound in lead.

Coot was thought by some to have most of the charm of the family, having gold crowns on his teeth and always carrying gloves. To keep up his reputation of charm it was his custom to address fulsome language to every woman he met, reading this up from a book he bought called *Sly Compliments for the Fair Sex*. It was nothing to Coot to call my wife "My pretty puss," or "My toothsome little poppet," this causing great amazement to B. Smith. Coot never actually married, fearing his charm might not wear well at close quarters, but he conducted several flirtations, and his method of conducting them was to smile a great deal and write letters in French. Although he had never learnt the language right through he knew a good many of the essential words, such as *Amour, Moi, Vous, and Toujours*. He always safeguarded himself, however, by ending "Without Prejudice" (in English).

Incomplete Story

"A 26-years-old R.A.F. pilot from Yorkshire fell from the third floor of a Y.M.C.A. building in New York on top of a sleeping negro and escaped with a broken wrist."—*News Chronicle*.



"Well, well, well! If it isn't Mary Jenkins home on leave from the farm!"



"I don't remember the Roundheads, Sir, but the Buffs were here a little time ago."

Growler

DOWERED as I am with nerves of steel,
When I beheld an ancient cab
Out on the plod I could but feel
A kind of jab.

I thought such things had vanished quite
Save one that takes a lonely prow
Up Piccadilly way by night
Like the dark owl.

But here in open day it bore
Its hidden fare serenely on,
With luggage, down the stately Gore
Of Kensington.

Was it engaged by one who clings
To his (or her) archaic ways,

The old forgotten far-off things
Of Edward's days?

Or does it, earliest of its kind,
Speak as the swallow famed in song
Of many others close behind
Coming along?

For one of speculative mood
This to the casual eye should lend
A theme whereon he ought to brood
For hours on end.

With me such mental efforts last
But little ere the brain grows numb;
I watch'd the growler as it passed
And thought "How rum!" **DUM-DUM.**



EUROPE IN BONDS



"All right, all right—I did say UNDER the bridge. Now are you satisfied?"

The Case of the Missing Bath-Plug

OUR bath-huts on the camp are not attractive. They are approached in boots, rubber, knee, and a dressing-gown across stony ground through stinging-nettles and mud. And their least attractive feature is the absence in the baths themselves of any plugs.

Various attempts have been made to explain this away. For your information, please see private intelligence summary as follows:

SOURCE	SUGGESTION
1. <i>W.A.A.F. Officer :</i>	Somebody eats them.
2. <i>Public Relations Officer (somewhat irrelevantly):</i>	The R.A.F. flies on its stomach.
3. <i>Padre (glancing sideways at the Sports Officer):</i>	Somebody has devised a game to be played using bath-plugs as counters.
4. <i>Sports Officer (spitefully):</i>	Suggest the Padre looks in the collection-bag after Church Parade.
5. <i>Warrant Officer (with voice of experience):</i>	Somebody takes them home.

6. *Accountant Officer (who never puts anything past anybody):*

Somebody is selling them off the Station at a profit.

7. *Other Ranks (mutinously):*

The Catering Officer orders the cooks to steal them in the night for inclusion in the date-pudding (see Suggestions 1 and 2).

8. *AC2 G.D. (who wishes to remain anonymous):*

"They was issued too small in the first place and ran away down the same 'ole as the water."

It had better be put on record at this point that this no-plugs matter was brought to the kind attention of the Air Ministry. A letter was received in reply inviting Administrative Officers to use their ingenuity in such cases, which information they duly passed on to us through the magic medium of Daily Routine Orders.

However, as it still remains that there are no bath-plugs in our camp baths, we, victims too long of a plugless bath,

set out on a tour of investigation. We are given to understand that Works and Bricks are the people who deal with this. Apparently they originally fitted each bath on the camp with a plug. So we pay a call on Works and Bricks and tell them that there are no bath-plugs to go with the baths any more. Works and Bricks say there must be because they put them there—one to each bath. We say—but there are no plugs there now. Works and Bricks say they have nothing in their files to say there are now no plugs in the baths, so as far as they're concerned they are still there. From long experience we know that this kind of thing can get very monotonous, so we try asking the Equipment Officer if there are any in the Stores. He says: "Golf-clubs?" We say: "No, bath-plugs." He says: "What size?" We answer (warming to our subject): "The exact size of the hole in the bath." He says: "Why, yes, of course, how silly of me! How many do you want?" We become nearly beside ourselves with excitement. "How many have you got?" He says: "Me? Oh, none; you want Works and Bricks—it's their pigeon." We think this is like a bad Ensa joke and say as much under our breath (in triplicate).

Back to Works and Bricks, who looks annoyed at seeing us again. "What is it now?" We explain—"We saw the Equipment Officer about the bath-plugs and he says that they are your pigeon." Fifty-seven varieties of expression chase each other across the face of poor old W. and B. He runs the gamut from the hysterical to the ridiculous and settles on a note of patient fury. "First it's bath-plugs and now it's pigeons. We have neither: go away."

So, giving up the unequal struggle, we make a strategic withdrawal to the bath-huts, where—through our valiant attempts to see justice done—we find we have missed our place in the queue. The water is already a few inches deep and every now and then a duck-board will come floating from under a bathroom door on a tidal wave. The bathroom sopranos are in good voice and there is a splendid lack of musical co-operation (and more combinations of different keys than ever Mr. Yale dreamed of). So with eight ahead and several different renderings of "Lovely Week-end" to wait, we decide to think up this short treatise on ways and means of tackling the universal problem of how-to-keep-the-water-in-the-bath-tub-without-the-necessary-plug. We are now something of an authority on the subject, having experimented with most means, so we will deal with each school of practice in the order of merit.

1.—*Pretending You Don't Care.* Personally we never took this outlook very seriously as, for one thing, we find indescribable solace in lingering in neck-high hot water and generally doing the thing properly. But, in all fairness, we must admit we have known the exponents of the quick-before-it-runs-away school quite happy with this wasteful and uncomfortable method.

2.—*The Heel.* Ramming the heel over the hole is painful and not altogether effective—causing an ugly rush of water down the waste-pipe when the heel is exchanged for washing purposes. (Unless, of course, you make arrangements with yourself to wash alternate heels on alternate nights.) Anyway, you are compelled to stand during the entire operation, so you might just as well have taken a shower in the first place. (We have very nice shower-baths.)

3.—*The Flannel.* This is the most generally used, and although quite a proportion of bath water seeps through the flannel fabric and is lost, it practically does the trick. The snag is, of course, that you are left with no means of applying the soap to the body—unless you use your handkerchief.

4.—*The Handkerchief.* Instead of the flannel which you could then use for washing.

5.—*The Tin.* There are some who swear by the lid of the liver salts tin, which just covers the hole nicely and is a hundred per cent. effective. This raises the fairly burning question as to what to use for the top of the liver salts, as it obviously has to have a top; but, all in all, this is a pretty satisfactory substitute for the missing article. But a word of warning: Don't let the N.A.A.F.I. fob you off with fruit salts, the top of which as a plug substitute is most definitely *not the same thing*.

There you are, we think that's about all. And as there is a bath free we wade in equipped with our (correction: somebody else's) liver salts lid.

Some minutes later we hear cries of distress from the next-door bath cubicle. We call out "What's the matter?" The tearful voice of a rookie comes floating back through the steam:

"It's no use. It *still* runs away. And the bath's so cold empty and I've been on Salvage to-day and I'm going to the pictures to-night and . . . oh, dear!"

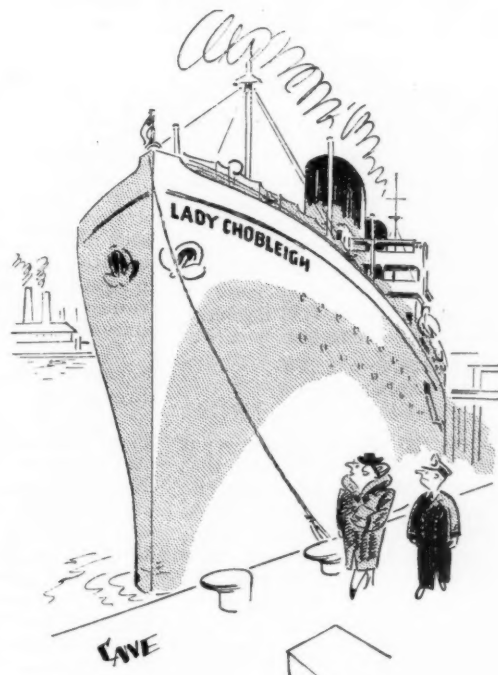
We call back in that voice that professionals generally use for talking to amateurs: "What are you using?"

Comes back the wail: "My ingenuity—and it leaks!"

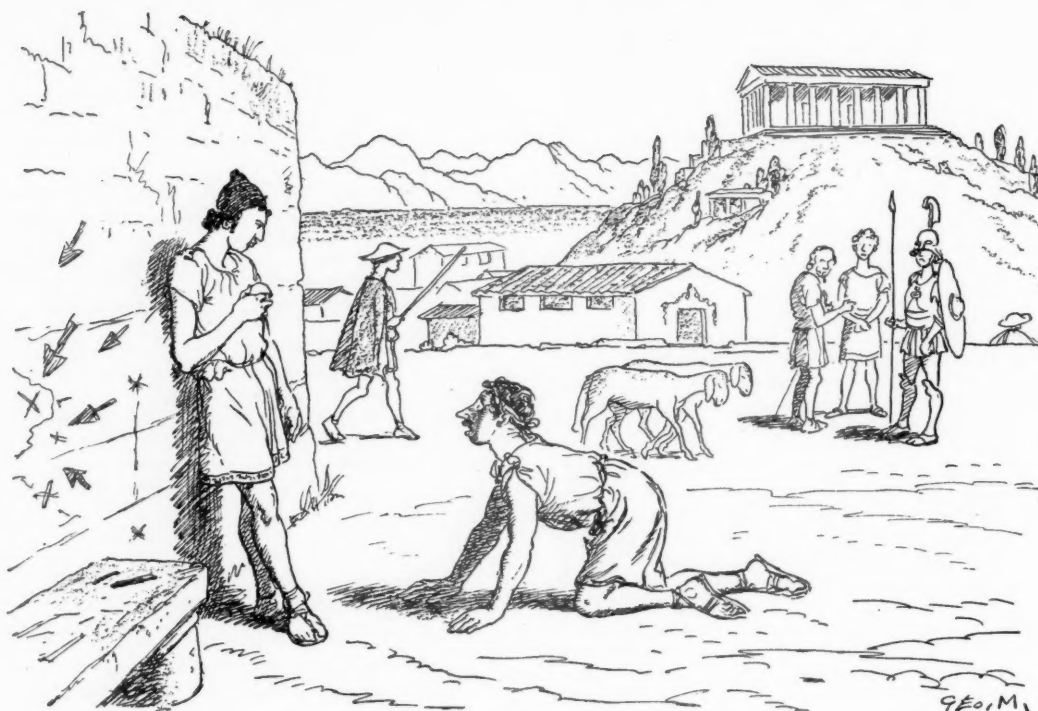
Canada

APRIL 1917 — AUGUST 1942

THEY woke that night on Vimy Ridge,
Faint shadows from afar,
The men who made the Channel bridge
Had come to join their war.



"I knew her mother well."



"Look at it this way, then—you're Troy and I'm the wooden horse."

Reports

To The Commanding Officer, R.A.F.
Station, Flurringham.

SIR,—I have to submit the following report for your information.

At Flurringham on the 12/8/42, at 1645 hours, as instructed by you at 1345 hours on the same day, I pair of black stage curtains were loaned to representatives of the R.A.F. Regiment. Their signed chit is attached.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
P. Torbyhood, A/Cpl., 1412729.

That was the report I actually put in. But it occurred to me later that the rigid exclusion of all irrelevancies (as required by Regulations) might cause the C.O. to wonder how it was that his order had taken me three hours to execute. So I have prepared a fuller report, just to keep by me in case of trouble.

To The Commanding Officer, R.A.F.
Station, Flurringham.

SIR,—At Flurringham on the 12/8/42 at 1350 hours, in accordance with

your instructions, I proceeded to "A" Squadron Office, where I saw Sergeant Bealby, R. I said to him, "Where are those long black curtains we had last winter in the Station Cinema?" He said to me, "Do not worry me with curtains. I am myself up the creek, as I signed a loan card for a two-inch varnish brush yesterday which has since disappeared."

At 1355 hours, as I was leaving the Squadron Office, I saw Flight-Sergeant Bromide, K. In reply to my inquiry, he said to me, "Sergeant Foot, S., who, in addition to his duties as Senior First Aid Instructor, is regarded as unofficial N.C.O. in charge of Entertainments, by reason of his fund of old-established anecdotes, is no doubt the custodian of the curtains you require."

At 1405 hours, following an investigation conducted at the First Aid Instructors' Office, Building 217, I ascertained that Sergeant Foot, S. had proceeded on Privilege Leave. 239742 A.C. Plummer, B., Duty Runner to Headquarters Squadron, said, "I heard Corporal Frogg, G., Junior First Aid

Instructor and partner in Sergeant Foot's well-known cross-talk act, refer to the keeping of all theatrical equipment in Room 7, Building 114."

At 1415 hours I examined the door of Room 7, Building 114, observing that the door was locked and bore the inscription "Band Room, etc."

At 1420 hours I fetched my bicycle from the rear of No. 2 Block, West Camp, and proceeded thereon to Headquarters Squadron Office, Building 217. This room was empty, owing to personnel having proceeded to the N.A.A.F.I. for afternoon break.

At 1445 hours Sergeant Gobey, W. returned from break. I said to him, "Where is Corporal Frogg, G. lecturing this afternoon, as I wish to contact him." He said to me, "Fortunately, and in spite of the disruption of the First Aid Syllabus owing to the absence on Privilege Leave of Sergeant Foot, S., I have cultivated a system of charts which enables me to tell you that Corporal Frogg, G. is at present giving his lecture on Pressure Points to a course of W.A.A.F.s in Building 202."

At 1455 hours I proceeded to Building 202, which was empty.

At 1510 hours I proceeded to Building 197, examining the occupants of classrooms 1 to 5. Corporal Frogg, G. was not there.

From 1515 hours to 1555 hours I proceeded to Buildings 4, 139, 222, 109, 295, 17 and 37, but was unable to gain information as to the whereabouts of Corporal Frogg, G.

At 1600 hours I proceeded to the Gymnasium, where I saw Corporal Frogg, G. under a tree, apparently gathering wood. I said to him, "Where have you been?" He said to me, "I have been here, endeavouring to find a piece of tree suitable as an illustration for a Greenstick Fracture." I said to him, "Where is the key to Room 7, Building 114?" He said to me, "Do you mean the key of the Band Room?" I said to him, "Yes." He said to me, "Do you want it?" I said to him, "Yes. Where is it?" He said to me, "I do not know." He then said, "Sergeant Foot, S. will know where it is." I said to him, "Sergeant Foot, S. is on Privilege Leave." He replied, "I know."

He then gave me information which led me to proceed at 1610 hours, to the Barber's Shop, Building 217, where I saw A.C. Hogston, B., Unit Hairdresser. I said to him, "I understand that you have the key to the door of the Barber's Shop, and that you periodically lend this key to the First Aid Instructors, whose office door across the passage it also happens to fit. May I borrow the key, as I understand it may also happen to fit the door of Room 7, Building 114?"

A.C. Hogston, B. replied, "I think you are under some misapprehension. There is no key to the door of the Barber's Shop, but there is a key to the door of the First Aid Instructors' office which happens to fit the door of the Barber's Shop, and which they periodically lend to me. This may be the key you require. I do not know where it is kept."

At 1615 hours I proceeded across the passage to the First Aid Instructors' Office, where I examined the door and observed a key in the lock.

At 1630 hours I proceeded to Building 114 with this key, and was able to effect entry into Room 7. It was empty.

At 1640 hours, Sir, I proceeded to your office. Two members of the R.A.F. Regiment were emerging with 1 pair of black stage curtains. I said to them, "Where did you obtain those curtains?" They said to me, "Your Commanding Officer found them in the bottom of his steel filing-cabinet and

handed them to us." I said, "Did you sign a chit for them?" They replied, "No." I said to them, "Sign this."

A signed chit is attached.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

P. Torbyhood, A/Cpl., 1412729.

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Visitors

SYMPSON enjoys being visited by Majors and Colonels, and when a Brigadier suddenly appears on the job and asks him shrewd questions about what his men are supposed to be doing he is thoroughly happy and generally manages to persuade him that all is well.

Personally, I prefer my superior officers to communicate by letter or telephone. It is not that I have anything against them personally. Without exception they are the most charming gang I have met in my life. But they always come at the wrong moments.

Five minutes before my Colonel arrived the other day, everything was going like clockwork. Eight men were industriously building a wall. Two men were deftly and with fervour mixing cement. Four men were painting completed huts. Even young Knott, who has reduced idleness to a fine art, was busily wheeling bricks hither and thither.

I heard the sound of a car on the road, and instinct told me that it was the Colonel. He had politely intimated that he intended to look me up, and I had given the men a little talk about first impressions being important, pointing out that a smart salute and a bright intelligent expression went a long way.

The Colonel was just getting out of his car as I approached, and I saluted smartly.

"You don't salute," he said, "without your hat."

I knew that, of course. What I did not know was that I was not wearing a hat. But this I did not explain. I merely smiled feebly and led him to the job.

"How many huts are you putting up?" he asked.

"Seven," I said.

"I can see eight," he replied in a surprised sort of voice. He was right. I could not make it out at the time, but afterwards I remembered that the eighth one had been put up before we arrived. As it was not one of our huts, I had forgotten all about it.

The Colonel remained courteous, but

I could see that he was reflecting that a new subaltern who saluted without a hat and didn't know how many huts he was erecting was Not Much Cop, as Private Barnes would put it.

I hoped the men would create a good impression.

The first one we encountered, Private Dawkins, was leaning on his spade, thinking. I knew perfectly well that he had done a good morning's work, but the Colonel, of course, did not.

"Why," he asked, "is that man leaning on his spade?"

"If he didn't lean on something," I said, "he would fall down." I can see now that my answer was a mistake. Even as the words came out I felt that they would be coldly received, but Colonels have a curious effect on me. Quite frankly, I am allergic to them.

The next man we came upon was Private Norris, who was on top of a ladder, painting. Private Norris is an obedient young man, but he is inclined to take orders a shade too literally. He straightened himself and saluted smartly with his right hand while retaining the paint-pot and brush in his left—and then fell off the ladder. Luckily not much paint went over the Colonel, and, as I told him, a drop of petrol would soon get it off.

We came upon the eight men who had been building the wall and the two men who were mixing cement. They were all lying down on the ground, smoking.

I ordered them to resume work immediately, but even so I felt that the Colonel was not pleased. Not until he had gone did I remember that it was the time of their mid-morning break.

As the Colonel climbed back into his car he said, "Have you got a good sergeant?"

"Yes, sir," I said. "He comes back from leave this evening."

"Good," he replied.

At the time I was glad he was pleased about something; but, thinking it over, I am not so sure.

o o

From Dover

EVERY morning when the sun
Her sweeping of the mist has
done,

Like a spectre haunting me
Up rises France from out the sea.

At evening when the sun's rays
reach

To stain with gold the sandy beach,
Clear and friendly to the glance
I see the beckoning coast of France.

Black Smoke Issuing from the Engine

AS a daily traveller on the 9.7 (Mons. to Fris. only) I am happy to report that the railway public is still in good heart.

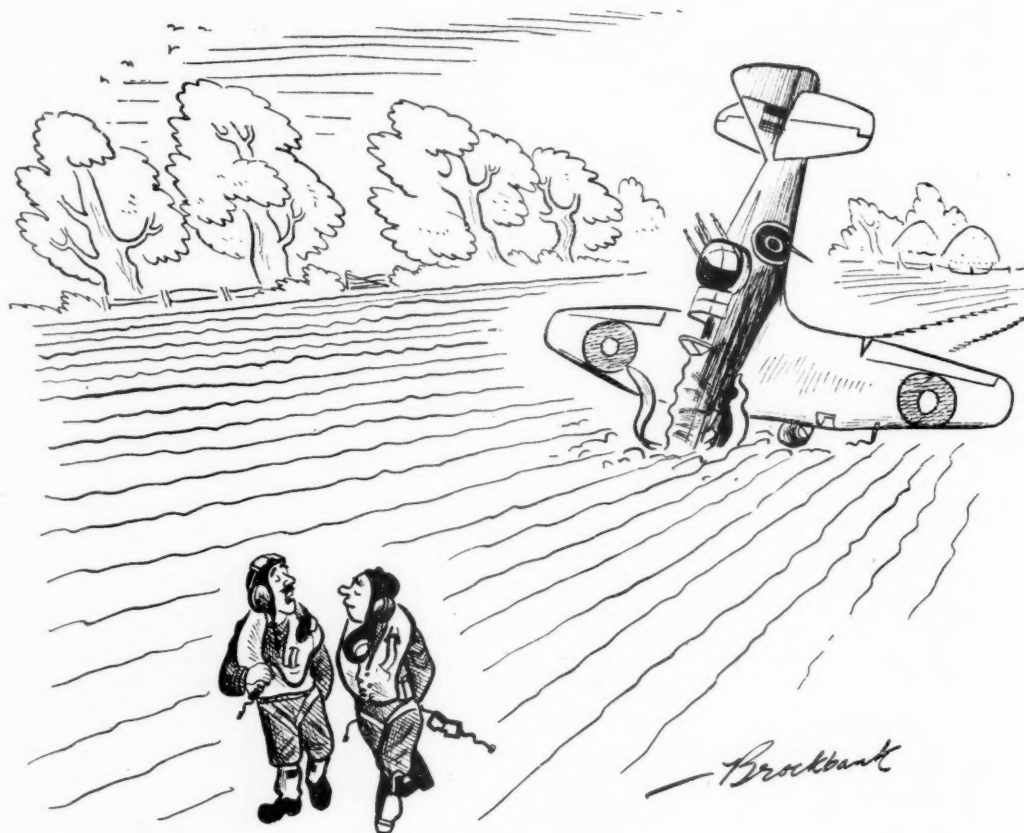
The 9.7 commences its journey from our station. It starts punctually if you are late and unpunctually if you have cut short your breakfast and omitted to take one last look at the lettuces. There is, moreover, a certain jockeying for position in the compartments. As a war-time concession we are prepared to accept four persons—which, after all, is three more than an Englishman really likes—and that is as far as we are prepared to go. When the corner seats are occupied we have no scruple in filling the intervening space with gas-masks, shopping-baskets, rain-coats and any dogs that happen to be available: and we all of us look up in a rather pained way when anyone stares in at the window.

You can't blame us for this, because in our compartment we are almost what you might call a "salon." There must, after all, be a spiritual bond between four men who each tap their breast-pockets to indicate a season ticket and say "Good morning, Charlie," to the guard.

Besides, we are all connoisseurs in the journey. This involves a great deal more than merely looking daggers at people who say "Is this seat occupied?" and expect you to move the morning paper.

Our train is so wildly erratic, having even been known to change its mind suddenly between two stations and travel backwards, that we each of us have our favourite stopping-places. Jno. Terry, our left-hand-facing-the-engine, has a perverse streak and likes the level-crossing where we often remain for ten minutes across the main road, whereas Geo. (Do-you-mind-if-I-have-this-window-open?) Crump prefers ripening wheat, though, at a pinch, he will resign himself to barley.

It is the Bredbourne (for Trumpington) siding, however, which gives us most general satisfaction. Just as at one time we knew every member of our League team, so are we equally familiar with every wagon. We appraise each newcomer with professional eyes, because we know the mark of a good wagon when we see one. Briefly, this consists of its tare, whether we had one like it when we were a boy, and, most important of all, its chalk markings.



"... As I was saying just before we took off ..."



"My wife wouldn't be satisfied till I gave her iron gates."

Wilsons and Spedding Colliery, Coy., one of our stalwarts, reads, for instance:

Bradford, Ems, Wanted? chi, V for Victory, Worthing, and e. finch loves doris.

Of course we all have our personal preferences. Bennett, our fourth, is a bit of a snob about wagons. He likes them plain and aristocratic, like "Peter Stewart, Sullinghampton" or "Quorn Bros. & Welche." He once knew a truck that belonged to a man he had met at a wedding in 'thirty-six, and never allows us to forget it. Crump is a plain man and likes "Sneyd," a forthright coal-truck. If I have a preference myself, it is for a cattle-truck marked "Green Peas only."

All our journeys, of course, are absolutely necessary, but we do not feel in our heart of hearts that anyone else's are. We even sometimes suspect Charlie the guard of taking up valuable space.

One day I tried to make a thorough investigation and obtained the following statistics:

2%	..	Isn't this the Reading train, then?
3%	..	Deaf.
95%	..	Didn't dare ask.

Warblinghampton, where we wait for the up fast, provides another significant pointer. Owing to the town's market status, it is frequently possible to observe livestock, particularly calves, tethered to the book-stall or an automatic machine. These calves are covered with old

sacks and, since it is my intention to withhold nothing from the public, they butt each other relentlessly.

Owing to the shortage of pigeons and the comparatively small drawing-power of crates of Leghorns, these calves come in for a good deal of attention. Passers-by react as follows:

68%	..	Pat on backs.
29%	..	Say "Moo."
2%	..	Where these calves for, Bert?
1%	..	Dunno.

—which proves, I think, if proof were needed, that the morale of the railway public is at peace-time pitch.

As for passengers, we still have enthusiasts who have appointed to wave to Aunt Ethel as they pass the bridge, and mothers who tell children that if they press that bell a man will come along with a big stick. There are wives who talk volubly and husbands who answer "Ur"; also courtly clergymen who say "Thank you, gentlemen, for the pleasure of your company." We even had a man one day whose cousin had said "Ah, Temple Meads," and stepped right off the Clifton Suspension Bridge in the black-out.

There are times, let's face it, when we feel we would like to use our first-class tickets, but then the third-class holders must have their rights. Have you paper and pencil handy? The number of our engine is 42305.

Good morning, gentlemen. See you on the 6.2.

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Detective Story

IN *Murder for Pleasure* (PETER DAVIES, 10/6), Mr. HOWARD HAYCRAFT, an American writer, has given an account of detective fiction from EDGAR ALLAN POE to the present times. Out of every four works of fiction published in the English language to-day, Mr. HAYCRAFT tells us, one is a detective story. This is a phenomenon which from various standpoints deserves analysis. Mr. HAYCRAFT, however, is either picturesque or what he calls factual, and his few attempts to deal with the less superficial aspects of his subject do not awaken much regret that they are not more numerous. He opens his book with a bird's-eye view of the States in the year in which POE wrote his first detective story, and having rounded off his panorama with "On the distant Illinois sod a lanky young giant was riding his first law circuits," comes at last to "tragic Israfil," as he calls POE. His detailed analysis of what detective fiction owes to POE is, however, excellent. Here his interest is genuinely engaged, and he shows that a single story, "The Purloined Letter," contains in embryo nearly the whole of the detective fiction of the last hundred years. Later on, in the course of his exhaustive survey of detective fiction, he enumerates various attempts to depart from the POE formula. Mr. AUSTIN FREEMAN, for example, the creator of *Dr. Thorndyke*, has gone into the science of detection so thoroughly that the police, according to Mr. HAYCRAFT, have borrowed some of his methods, a tribute they have not paid to any other writer. Mr. FREEMAN WILLS CROFTS has mastered police routine; and G. K. CHESTERTON, at the opposite extreme from these devotees of detail, has made a clear grasp of Catholic theology the sole and sufficient weapon in the armoury of his detective priest. But neither propaganda nor a close adherence to matters of fact is really in place in detective stories. According to Miss DOROTHY SAYERS, the detective is the "true successor of Roland and Lancelot," and there is a great deal to be said for this claim, large though it may at

first sight seem. In the introduction to this book Mr. CECIL DAY LEWIS, under his pseudonym of "NICHOLAS BLAKE," writes from a studiously left-wing standpoint, entirely opposed to Miss SAYERS'. The richer classes, he says, concerned for their lives and property, prefer detective stories to gangster thrillers; the poorer classes have a natural preference for stories in which the rich are looted. This, put more cordially, is also Lord HEWART's view. "The detective story, as distinct from the crime story," he says, "flourishes only in a settled community where the readers' sympathies are on the side of law and order." The flaw in this argument is that the detective of fiction is neither an official representative of the law nor much in sympathy with its workings. *Sherlock Holmes*, the most popular of all detectives, owes his universal fame to the skill with which CONAN DOYLE conveys the impression that *Holmes* is fighting a lone fight against the powers of evil, which, it is implied, would sweep everything before them if *Lestrade* and the other boobies at Scotland Yard were the sole bulwarks of civilized life. *Holmes* is the champion of good against evil, not of law against illegality. On one occasion he condones a crime which his moral sense does not condemn, on another he leaves a murderer "to a higher tribunal than the Old Bailey," and in the case of *Charles Augustus Milverton* he and *Watson* break into that black-mailer's house and are only saved from committing a burglary by the intervention of a woman who, to the satisfaction of *Holmes*, empties a revolver into *Milverton*. *Holmes*, *Hanaud*, *Poirot*, *Lord Peter* and the rest are the contemporary equivalents of *Amadis de Gaul*, *Palmerin of England* and the other knights of romance in imitation of whom *Don Quixote* rode out into a world ill-adapted to the satisfaction of heroic dreams. To make a detective a plausible human being, to fit him laboriously into the framework of ordinary life, is to nullify his whole purpose, which is to raise the reader above his own humdrum but more or less insoluble problems in the contemplation of a superior being for whom problems exist only to be solved. Whether it is a good thing to administer this drug to the reading public is another question. A few years before the last war a German newspaper published an article entitled "*Das Sherlockismus*," in which the writer deplored the craze for *Sherlock Holmes* which was sweeping over Germany. In its tendency to focus attention on crime and violence it was, he said, destructive of all higher intellectual interests and morally subversive. Though unfair to the *Holmes* saga, this criticism forecast the direction which detective fiction was taking correctly enough. Murder is not the only or even the most important theme in the *Holmes* stories. Nowadays, as Mr. HAYCRAFT complacently remarks, "Murder has come to be the accepted theme of the detective novel, for reasons too numerous and obvious to require attention." The romances of chivalry suffered the same decline from their original inspiration. It was not *Amadis de Gaul* but his degenerate successors who provoked CERVANTES to write *Don Quixote*, and a modern CERVANTES might find a similar stimulus in some, at least, among the successors of the *Amadis* of Baker Street. H. K.

Unarm, Eros . . .

Most of us (such is the odd make-up of humanity) are citizens of two countries: the country we exist in or exploit but very rarely serve, and the country for which we are prepared to die. The best thing that can be said about war is that it sees the first attitude superseded or completed by the second. The best thing that can be said about peace is that it should render it as natural to live for your country as to die for it. Meanwhile youth, maturity, even old age,



combine to pay their heroic toll; and *Went the Day Well* . . . (HARRAP, 8/6) has assembled forty records of this supreme generosity with "For Freedom" as their common inspiration. The passing of forty heroes and heroines of the allied nations is here told by survivors. The London air-raid warden does his "cucumber act" of coolness until the bomb brings down the curtain. The Chinese editor writes his last defiant letter under the suspended sword. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, housewives, fire-fighters, ambulance-drivers, famous and obscure, yield to Mr. DEREK TANGYE, his colleagues and his readers a single theme, endlessly diversified, for grief and exultation. The royalties from this unique book are to be given to the Prisoners of War Fund of the British Red Cross.

H. P. E.

Love's Epitaph

Often the best epitaph on a beautiful personality seems to be something—book, picture or statue—which will recall the excellencies of the beloved for years to come. This is what Sir IAN HAMILTON has sought to create for his wife in *Jean* (FABER, 12/6). It is very simply written, with humour and delight in the good things of life and without sentimentality. The love and admiration which have inspired the octogenarian author are still much the same as they were when, a dashing soldier, he wooed and won the belle of a Simla season, though she was already engaged to an Austrian Prince. In spite of ill-health JEAN HAMILTON contrived to be the encouragement and delight of hundreds of people who met her in society or in her work for children and men of the services, as the letters of condolence on her death coming from all sorts of friends—from Mr. CHURCHILL and from her kitchenmaid—published at the end of the book, testify. The author himself has refrained from expressions of grief, his book breathes love, but gives nothing too intimate to the outside world. Many of the illustrations, including FURSE's portrait of JEAN HAMILTON, "The Cloak," are very lovely.

B. E. S.

Backwards or Forwards?

Fifty years ago, fifty miles from London, the Buckinghamshire village described in *Good Neighbours* (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 10/6) flourished in the still-roseate afterglow of the old free days before the enclosures. "A thousand years of habit," says Mr. WALTER ROSE (whose people were the village carpenters), went when the enclosures came; and it took the last war, he maintains, to eliminate land-hunger from the English labourer. If he had said the discouraging interregnum between that war and this he might have been nearer the mark; but no one need read his unique and delightful book for its critical acumen, which is variable, when they can enjoy its intimate recording of the traditional ways of a self-supporting

agricultural community. Mr. ROSE knows his carters, ploughmen, shepherds, masons, wheelwrights, thatchers, hurdle-makers, millers, brewers and bakers inside and out. But he is not sufficiently the optimist to see that their methods are still practicable in the hands of anyone ardent and austere enough to revive them. Take, for instance, the thatched straw-and-chalk walls, so charmingly drawn by Mr. JOHN HOOKHAM, which he notes as peculiar to his district and its past. MAURICE HEWLETT was only following a local Wiltshire fashion when he made fruit walls in exactly the same way for his Old Rectory at Broad Chalke.

H. P. E.

Thé Case for Schuschnigg

The last Chancellor of free Austria is still little known in this country. And indeed Dr. KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG was never the sort of figure to take the world by storm. A fervent Catholic, educated at the famous seminary of Feldkirch, he had a temper too unemotional to make

for popularity. His Jesuit teachers, it seems, had perceived his qualities from the first, and trained him for his future chancellorship. But because of that training his view of life was always coloured by religious prejudice. And the Jesuit influence made for the suppression of all personal feeling, so that even his friends regarded him as cold and impenetrable. It was only when misfortunes began to crowd upon him that his country began to perceive his value. The accident (if it was an accident) that deprived him of his first wife awoke general sympathy. And then came the famous "interview" with HITLER at Berchtesgaden, and its sequel. The ex-Chancellor has disappeared, but the sympathy of all but the Nazi world has gone out to him. And this life, by Mr. R. K. SHERIDON, called simply *Kurt von Schuschnigg* (ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES PRESS,

15/-), is obviously the work of a staunch admirer, as the sub-title "A Tribute" shows. It is the story of a young man, thrust unwillingly into a most arduous post, who had about as hard a struggle as is recorded in history. All through his short tenure of power, beginning when he succeeded his friend the murdered DOLLFUSS, he had to work with colleagues of more than doubtful allegiance. First there was the flamboyant STAHEMBERG (Mr. SHERIDON prints him as STAHEMBERG throughout) and the unscrupulous Major FEY, that "hatchet-faced Knight of Maria Theresa," who had to be managed. He succeeded in dealing with them, only to find himself surrounded by traitors like GUIDO SCHMIDT and SEYSS-INQUART and, perhaps the most important of VON PAPEN's tools, his personal secretary Baron FROELICHSTAL. This "pleasant young man," whom the Chancellor trusted implicitly, repeated every word he uttered for the benefit of Berlin, receiving his reward after the final crash in a high Austrian administrative post with a large salary. A tragic story and, on the whole, a worthy tribute to a true patriot. L. W.



"Miss Wilkins, how often must I remind you that you must NOT send love-letters on the conveyer?"

British Industries at War

Cement

(Mr. Punch's Special Reporter begins his tour of Industrial Britain at the Aspdin Hotel, Leeds.)

IT is impossible to remain in the great city of Leeds for very long without discussing cement. Not that much cement is made there—it isn't—but everyone in Leeds is intensely and loquaciously proud of Joseph Aspdin the inventor of cement. You may begin a conversation by asking the difference between woollens and worsteds, about the origin of the celebrated rhubarb plantations, or about Herbert Sutcliffe, and by some subtle and apparently unpremeditated manoeuvre the talk will turn to cement and Joseph Aspdin. It is remarkable. In Leeds they do not speak of Aspdin but of "Joe." The name is used with a familiarity to suggest a ubiquitous knowledge of a thousand biographical anecdotes. They will take you to the common shrine, "Joe's birthplace," to "Joe's museum" and to the innumerable marble effigies which are so largely responsible for the city's traffic problem. Unless you have the romance of industry in your blood the constant repetition of the name becomes irritating, even maddening. I had not been in the Aspdin Hotel longer than an hour before I decided to write an article on cement rather than on the clothing industry.

Joseph Aspdin was one of those men whom civilization has chosen to honour by making them the vehicles of her progress. His discovery of Portland cement in 1824 ranks as one of the most amazing freaks of coincidence. The story, shorn of all local embellishments, is roughly this. Aspdin, who was by trade a hodman, happened to have in his possession a specified quantity of finely pulverized chalk which he had once used to dress the coat of his fox-terrier, Nell. Mrs. Aspdin, a woman of unusual talents and a life-member of the Leeds United Guild of Women Craftworkers, happened at the same time to have in her possession a specified quantity of finely pulverized clay from which she was wont to model shepherdesses and borzois. What was more natural than that the two substances should be jettisoned simultaneously by their respective owners during a spring-cleaning operation designed to make room for Mr. Aspdin's mother-in-law! And what more natural than that they should be consigned to the kitchen fire! That was on Friday, April 23rd.

The next day, April 24th, was to see history made. Joseph Aspdin came downstairs to perform his quotidian task of making a cup of tea for his wife. He was about to rake out the ashes from the grate when his trained eye caught the clinkered remains of the overnight holocaust. It was then that he uttered the memorable words "Here is a hydraulic binding material far superior to any other product known up to now." Aspdin was right. Portland cement (he had a brother living in the South) is even to-day one of the stickiest substances used by man.

Aspdin was unaffected by his triumph. He remained the same unassuming, comradely and generous hodman he had always been. Therein lay his greatest charm. Leeds took him for her own. He was fêted and idolized. He became a Buffalo.

To-day the cement manufacturers and concrete mixers are happy indeed. "What if prices are controlled?" they say. "We are making good money and doing work of national importance." The new prosperity of these people is reflected in their faces, in the spick-and-span impeccability of their little cottages nestling among the lime quarries. But you will see their faces cloud with remembered anguish if you should mention the dread word "Magenot." For Magenot meant concrete and concrete means cement. The collapse of France came as a tragic blow to these men. They saw in it not only the breakdown of the Balance of Power in Europe but the death-knell of the Amalgamated Union of Cement and Concrete Mixers. You will not get these men to talk easily of their trials—the density of beer being what it is and Yorkshiremen being what they are—but I have been able to piece together the incoherent fragments of their tale. The careless criticism of those bitter days wounded them very deeply. They walked as outcasts among their fellow countrymen. Everybody blamed concrete and cement. Then, like a bolt from the blue, the Home Guard came to the rescue. Immense quantities of road blocks were demanded for the purpose of stopping motorists or making them turn back. Cement was exculpated and rehabilitated. The quarries smiled again.

Joseph Aspdin would be happy if he could see Britain to-day.

Before I left Leeds I climbed a hill to the east of the city and looked down upon a little quarry and its adjacent works. The slurry tanks, kilns and "navvy" excavators seemed part and parcel of the rural scene. Nature's own camouflage. Here men were struggling with grim primordial things as their ancestors had done. I felt ashamed of my mean little notebook and slick self-propelling pencil, and put them away.

I too have caught the infectious bonhomie of cement. Back in London I am looking with less disfavour upon my stucco, for is it not a sermon in stones by Joseph Aspdin?

o o

Explanation to My Aunt

"CERTAINLY, Aunt, I'll do anything in the world I can to make things clearer to you—especially if you feel that you're heading straight for the madhouse—but I do think you ought to realize that the whole question of civilian procedure in an invasion is rather a difficult one.

Very well, if you've realized that, then we know where we are.

What is worrying you, Aunt?

Just the invasion?

I see—Instructions to Civilians. Still, you do remember how we were all told, long ago, just to stay put. Why do you think they've changed their minds? Simply because they want you *not* to stay indoors if small parties of the enemy are moving about? Well, Aunt, what *can* be your trouble about that? You've got nothing to do except look out of the front bedroom window and see if there are any small parties of the enemy moving about.

No, I don't know what they'd call a small party. About fifteen of them, I should think. Or perhaps sixteen. Anyway, don't spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar. If it should be sixteen, don't let it worry you. Behave as if it were fifteen. On the other hand if it's only fourteen, I don't know what to say exactly. Perhaps you'd better be guided by whether they're moving about or not.

No, Aunt, I don't think that just a natural change of position *would* count as moving about. You've got to be reasonable about this. It's *definitely* moving about if they're putting up gun-emplacements round the summer-house, or throwing a pontoon across

your dear little stream, or even digging trenches near the hen-house. That's the sort of thing that shows you they really are invaders, and not the Home Guard doing an exercise.

Well, you've got to do something to impede them.

No, I don't honestly think it would impede them one bit if you just said that trespassers would be prosecuted. You'll have to think of something much better than that.

If you feel you could *handle* Great-Uncle Robert's old fowling-piece, of course that's an excellent idea, and I should think just the sort of thing the Government would like.

Oh, dear no, much better keep both hands for the fowling-piece. And anyway, the foils are put away somewhere in the attic, and it might take quite a time to find them. And last time I saw them, both of them were rusty.

Why are you worrying about being in an area in effective occupation of the enemy?

It doesn't mean a thing, Aunt. At least, I mean it only means an area that the enemy have taken over altogether.

I *know* the village is as brave as a lion and that in the last exercise they held the Post Office for nearly forty minutes. But for the sake of the argument, Aunt, and if you're to get this thing at all straight, we've just got to assume that this *is* an area that the enemy has taken over altogether.

Well, I can't exactly tell you how you could tell. But there they'd be, all over the place, and the Swastika very likely waving over the Vicarage elm-tree, and everything looking as unnatural as possible. No, I've no idea what would have happened to the Vicar—but, naturally, I quite agree that he wouldn't let himself be taken without a struggle. And it wouldn't be any good at all for you just to break down, as you suggest. The Government distinctly says that anyone who can do anything to impede the enemy is to go out and do it.

I know they said we were to shut all the doors and the windows and go down into the cellar and not stir.

Yes, I know they said we were to let the enemy come in and then refuse to give him anything whatever, and telephone the police or the fire-brigade or the A.R.P., and we can only hope that it'll happen on one of the days when your telephone isn't out of order.

Yes, *and* I know they said we were to go out and puncture the tyres of their lorries and motor-bicycles, and take away their rifles when they aren't looking.

The fact of the matter is, Aunt, you'll just have to be guided by circumstances. There really aren't more than about seven different things for you to choose from, when all's said and done.

There is only one thing you *must* be absolutely firm with yourself about, Aunt, and that is not to worry. After all, an invasion is only an invasion, when all's said and done."

E. M. D.



"If this goes on our brilliant scientists will have to think up an ersatz for ENDURANCE!"

Words and Music

I AM thinking of going into the theatrical business. I have secured an option on the stage settings for *The Merchant of Venice* and the costumes from *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

There was a time, so I am told, when the only way to produce a British musical comedy was to take an original script from the best Hungarian sources, have it adapted in Paris, wed it to a considerable amount of American music and serve with a touch of Rugger-dinner farce and a small Russian ballet inset. It was then bound to be a success.

Now, it is all very difficult. Take the sets, for example. Nobody has any wood or canvas, so you contact Mr. A, who is believed still to have a good deal of the material used for *Puss in Boots* in Leeds in 1939, and Mr. B, who is known to have produced *The Master Builder* in 1924 and rather thinks that he may have something still in store in Cardiff. And if you finally produce a musical comedy with a background of *East Lynn* or *A Royal Divorce*, well, who cares? It's not as though you had to have a plot, anyhow, and if you can't be fashionable and produce it with a background of an American Training Camp, well, anywhere will do.

On the other hand, the costumes are, by comparison, easy. In the first place, if you do unearth all the dresses from, say, *Our Miss Gibbs*, there is enough yardage there to dress at least five musical comedies, and a couple of

revues from the odd bits left over. And you can get coupons. And your actors and actresses probably have some clothes of their own. And if not, they have their own coupons. And when those have run out you can still buy a little chintz, or carpet, or black-out material. But, so I am told, you must not expect to find any dress-makers. You may find one man with ideas and no assistants, and you will find several men with neither ideas nor assistants, but the thing to look for is a small dressmaker in the remote parts of, say, Rutland or Merioneth who is used to running things up with little or no outside aid.

But I find that the musical position is far from satisfactory. Undoubtedly there are composers. Whenever you ask after so-and-so you are told he is either serving overseas or is in an R.A.F. band. But those that are left seem to have exhausted themselves in writing how well London has taken it for the last two years. A nice marching song for the second front or even a love song from a mixed A.A. Regiment—"Predictor Pru" or the girl who lost her heart on Radiolocation—would be a pleasant change.

But I have left till last what will be my principal difficulty. I mean the cast. Either one can have old men in the parts of old men being young or contrariwise old men in the parts of young men being young, neither of which are very attractive. But maybe

there is a way round that. I have already thought out a rough idea for the properties I have in hand. Lady Windermere has a palace near Venice and the family jewels in the caskets are all she has to take her to Reno. (Yes, you are right, the plot is to some extent derived from *The Women*.) Shylock is female and owns the beauty-parlour, and Jessica is, of course, the gold-digger. I assure you the chorus of deserted wives from the Naughty Nineties in the Rialto scene will have to be seen to be believed. I am trying to think of how to avoid introducing Lady Windermere's fan otherwise than as a fan-dance, but on that I may be defeated.

Of course I realize that even my female cast may be called up. It is the latest idea. Take the glamour to the Services. Why expect them to come to the theatre to be amused?

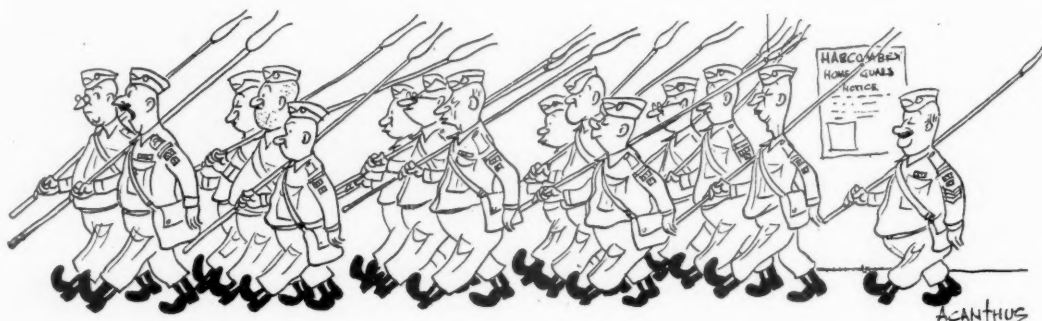
But, believe me, it will be a remarkable show, if you ever see it.

A New Europe

"Wickham Steed, 'The Place of Australia in a New Europe,' English Speaking Union. 7."—"To-Day's Events" column.

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Teddy bear?



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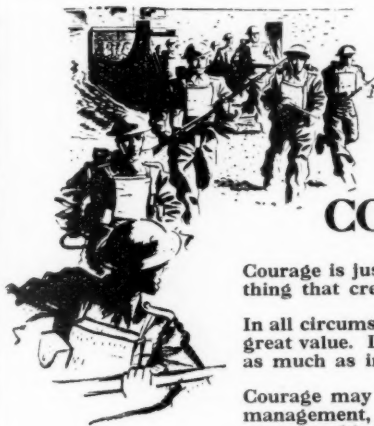
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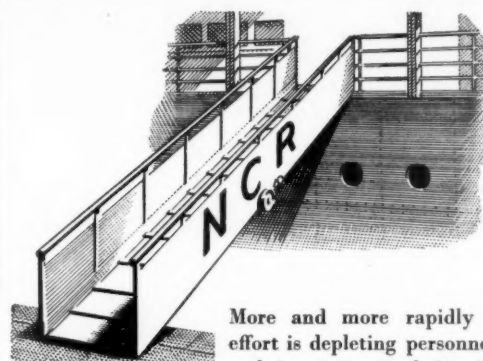
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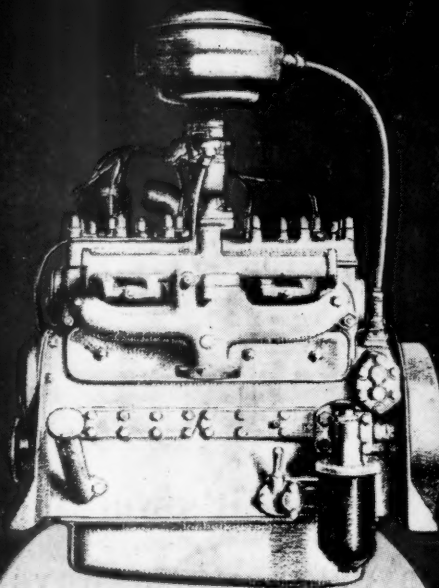
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